procedural simplifications and has taken steps to remove such constraints.

It is the endeavour of the Government to take concerted measures to remove infrastructure constraints at ports, airports and other handling points. Various measures have been taken to simplify the procedures related to movement of cargo, reduce the dwell time, rationalise handling costs and bring greater efficiency at ports/ airports and other handling points. Inland Container Depots (ICDs) and Container Freight Stations (CFSs) are being established in various parts of the country to facilitate container transportation of goods and intermodal conveyance. Private initiative is being harnessed in creating infrastructure at ports, airports, in upgrading highway and in setting up of ICDs/CFSs, warehouses, etc.

Special attention has also been accorded to implement the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) at Ports/Airports/ICDs to cut down multiplicity of documents. The Department of Revenue has taken measures to facilitate faster movement and clearance of goods. Important measures, inter-alia, include simplification of transhipment rules, coastal shipping, bonded trucking, rational measures for speedy clearance of export-import goods and extended coverage of different export related schemes at various ports of registration.

Use of expertise in knowledge based industries

1883. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India can use its expertise in knowldge-based industries to become a top trading partner of the West in the new millennium, cancelling out the advantage which China gained in the closing Century with its manufacturing strength, as reported in the Hindustan Times, dated 2nd December, 1999; and

(b) in what manner India can be the services hub of the world and also be the Central place from which knowledge industries can generate and flourish, like China; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) India has the advantage of vast pool of skilled and technically trained man-power for promoting

export of skill based and knowledge based services. The country has shown its potential in software sector which has great scope for expansion; pharmaceuticals is another sector of great potential. Recognising the importance of services. Services export was included in the Exim Policy to provide this sector the needed boost. Policy measures are continuously being taken to encourage the services sector as well as the knowledge based industries so that they are able to contribute substantially to the growth of services exports.

Industrialisation of backward areas of Goa

1884. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Meta Strips Limited is setting up a big factory at Industrial Estate, Cortalim and Sancoale Village, Goa, with active support of Government financial institutions;

(b) whether the unit will help in industrialisation of backward areas of Goa in a big way since industry is a self-generating economy;

(c) whether some local organisations are protesting against setting up of this unit on false pretext of pollution; and

(d) if so, what steps Government are taking to ensure that industrialisation is not hampered there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the State Government and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Export of Flowers and Fruits

1885. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have proposal to increase the export of flowers and fruits to different countries;

(b) if so, the countries to which flowers and fruits are being exported at present and the total amount of foreign exchange earned by Government by exporting flowers and fruits during the last three years;